

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

March 27, 2015

A regular meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, March 27, 2015. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Iraida Williams, Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioner Angelyne E. Cooper, Esq., Tolulope Kevin Olanoye, Esq. and Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq. The meeting commenced at 12:35 p.m. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson arrived at 1:00 p.m.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the minutes of February 27, 2015. Commissioner Lee seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Status Report of Michael D. Évora, Executive Director

A written report was handed out. All new information is in bold print.

Case Production Report – Attached

Aged Case Report – No aged cases to report.

Outreach Report – Attached

STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS

OUTREACH: Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson continues to work on the Statewide Disabled American Veterans Conference and the issue of broadening their benefits. The Commissioner is also concerned with the transferability of Purple Heart license plates.

GENERAL STATUS: The new Commissioner photos are presently hanging in the Hearing Room.

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STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Cynthia M. Hiatt and Francis Gaschen.

LITIGATION: Counsel and the Commissioners reviewed pending litigation in which the Commission has a role. Report attached.

LEGISLATION: Legal Counsel reported on pending bills relating to civil rights and the bills were discussed.

HEARING SCHEDULE/STATUS OF HEARING CASES: Commission Counsel discussed with the Commissioners the hearing schedule.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Commission is April 24, 2015 at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael D. Evora
Executive Director

Notes taken by B. Ross
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
27 March 2015

I. BUDGET

S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD); T = Total

	FY 2015	FY 2015	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2016
	(Enacted)	(Rev. Req)	(Revised)	(Req.)	(Gov. Rec.)
S	1,193,083	1,206,185	1,221,763	1,231,273	1,252,174
F	287,096	332,950	301,692	319,355	295,386
T	1,480,179	1,539,135	1,532,455	1,550,628	1,548,010

On June 13, the House passed a budget which included funding for the Commission consistent with the Governor's recommendations for FY14 and FY15 (see above). The Senate passed the budget on June 16, 2014 and it was signed by the Governor on June 19, 2014.

The Commission's FY15 (Revised) and FY16 (Requested) budget requests were submitted to the Governor, House/Senate Fiscal Advisors and Budget Office officials on September 12, 2014. See above for details.

The Governor has submitted her FY 2015 (Revised) and FY 2016 (Recommended) budgets for the Commission to the General Assembly. Details are noted above.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY12 (ending September 30, 2012), according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.

Our contract with EEOC for FY12 was for 235 cases. For federal FY13 (ending September 30, 2013), we closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY14 (ending September 30, 2014), we closed 232 co-filed cases. Our modified contract for FY14 was for 230 cases. For federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014), we have closed 83 co-filed cases. Our contract for federal FY15 is yet unknown.

HUD – For FY13, we took in 51 new housing charges, all of which were co-filed with HUD, and we processed 50 cases, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY14, we took in 49 new housing charges, 47 of which are co-filed with HUD, and we processed 51 cases, 50 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations). For FY15 (beginning July 1, 2014), we have taken in 86 new housing charges, 56 of which are eligible to be co-filed with HUD. (27 were not eligible for co-filing and three were deferred to HUD for investigation.) Within this same time period, we have processed 49 cases, 40 of which were co-filed with HUD; two of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations.

UPDATE ON HUD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS – The first grant, for approximately \$56,000, was for a targeted outreach (including development of training/education materials) to the LGBT community and victims of domestic violence. On March 17, former Investigator Susan Pracht began a nine-month position as Community Liaison Specialist overseeing the implementation of the LGBT/Domestic

Violence grant. The project is complete. Susan Pracht has submitted her final report to HUD. Because the project came in under budget, we requested that HUD permit us to use leftover grant funds to produce a general fair housing brochure, poster and Power Point presentation for use in outreaches going forward, and to conduct five fair housing outreaches throughout the state. That request has been approved.

III. PERSONNEL – No new information.

IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report.

V. GENERAL STATUS

●Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.

●Case Closures – Refer to attached report.

In FY11, we processed 422 cases; in FY12, we processed 411 cases (approx. 3.5% decrease). For FY13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY12). For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we processed 376 cases (decrease of approx. 3% from FY13). For FY15 (beginning July 1, 2014), we have processed 246 cases (compare to 235 cases in this same time period in FY14).

●Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission’s inventory for federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014).

●Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 1998. We ended FY11 with 323 cases in inventory, FY12 with 255 cases, FY13 with 265 cases, and FY14 with 290 cases. As of 3/25/15, we had a total of 350 cases in inventory; 46 of these cases were pending assignment.

●HUD Onsite/Performance Assessment – Two officials from HUD conducted an onsite visit on March 16 as part of HUD’s annual performance assessment process. During the course of the on-site, the HUD officials interviewed me, Cynthia Hiatt, Frank Gaschen and Angie Lovegrove; they also conducted reviews of ten housing case files to assess compliance with HUD case-processing guidelines. We now await HUD’s report/conclusions.

●New Commissioner Photos – The prints of the photographs of Commissioners Cooper and Olasanoye have been received and are now hanging in the Hearing Room.

●Annual Report – The FY14 Report has been completed and sent to the printer. I reviewed and approved a proof of the Report on March 23. We await receipt of the Reports for distribution.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments